VEDĀNTA AND ADVAITA ŚAIVĀGAMA OF KASHMIR : A COMPARATIVE STUDY

DR JAIDEVA SINGH

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OF CULTURE
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Foreword

Dr Jaideva Singh is a much respected name as an exponent of Indian philosophy and Indian music. His contributions in these fields are rich and varied. But, above all, he is a lovable person. A stranger may talk to him for hours without for a moment suspecting that he is talking to a great scholar. Simple and modest in his habits, kind and generous, he is a true representative of the old-time Indian scholars.

Sometime in December 1984, Dr Singh gave three Banka Bihari-Hemangini Pal memorial lectures at the Institute, one devoted to Vedānta in general and the other two devoted to the Para-Advaita Philosophy of Śaivāgama in particular. These lectures were highly appreciated by the audiences. It was then felt that it would be a good idea to publish these lectures for the benefit of the larger public. Hence this booklet. Mr Jagadiswar Pal, son of the late Banka Bihari and Hemangini Pal, has paid for the printing of this booklet. He has also funded the memorial lectures which Dr Singh gave.

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THE PHILOSOPHY OF VEDĀNTA

An unfortunate fact about Vedānta is that it is generally considered to be synonymous with Śaṅkara's philosophy. Advaita or Vedānta has come to mean the philosophy as propounded by Śaṅkara.

The *prasthāna-traya*, viz. the Upaniṣads, the Brahmasūtras, and the Gītā, have been interpreted by each *ācārya* in the light of his own sectarian views. Each has tried to draw support from these sources for his own sect and has read into them thoughts of his own system.

Here we shall try to go to the original source and see what truth it yields to us. All have admitted that it is the Upaniṣads which constitute Vedānta. '*Vedānto nāma Upaniṣad*' is the dictum that is respected by all. Even Śārīraka sūtras are considered to be merely an adjunct.

So in the interpretation of the philosophy of Vedānta, we shall take our stand entirely on the Upaniṣads. The Upaniṣads are known as Brahma-vidyā.

They expound only Brahman and Ātman. Three phases can be noticed in the Upaniṣads. The first phase is an attempt to discover the world-ground. The second phase is to discover the essence of the human being. The third phase is to discover the relation of the world to the world-ground and the relation of the essence of man to the world-ground.

The World-Ground: Many questions were posed by the thinkers of the Upaniṣads regarding the world-ground. Is *salila* or cosmic water the origin of the world or is it

ākāśa or is it *vāyu* or *tejas*, i.e. fire ? The intuitive discovery of the Ṛṣis was that it is Brahman.

Then the question arose : "What is the nature or *svarūpa* of Brahman ?" Another question was : "What is the relation of the manifested universe to Brahman ?"

So far as the essence of human being was concerned, the intuitive discovery of the Ṛṣis was 'that is Ātman'. In this connection again the natural question was: "What is the relation of the Ātman to Brahman ?" So it is under four headings that we shall try to understand the philosophy of Vedānta, viz. (1) The *svarūpa* or nature of Brahman, (2) The essence of the human being, (3) The relation of the essence of the human being to Brahman, (4) The relation of the world to Brahman.

(1) The Svarūpa of Brahman

The Negative Approach :

There have been two approaches to the realization of the nature of Brahman—one negative, the other positive. The negative approach maintains that the nature of Brahman is indeterminate. It is known as the *neti neti* approach. Brahman is 'not this, not that'. It is only in negative terms that we can speak about Brahman.

The Taittirīya Upaniṣad says,

Brahman is that 'wherefrom words turn back, together with the mind, not having attained (it)'. यतो वाचो निवर्तन्ते अप्राप्य मनसा सह ।

Kaṭha says, अन्यत्र भूताच्च भव्याच्च (2. 14), "It is apart from what has been, and what is to be".

It is *nirviśeṣa*—not any particular, not qualified, *nirvikalpa*, indeterminate, *nirupādhi*, unconditioned,

nirañjana, without stain and indefinable, *niṣkala*, without parts.

Since it is beyond speech and thought, it is transcendent. In the words of Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad, it is अदृष्टमव्यवहार्यमग्राह्यमलक्षणमचिन्त्यमव्यपदेश्यम्––i.e. it is unseen, it is that with which there can be no dealing; it is ungraspable; it has no distinctive mark; it is unthinkable; it cannot be designated; it is *advaita*, without a second (Māṇḍūkya 7).

Matter is not ultimate reality; *prāṇa* is not ultimate reality; neither *manas* nor *vijñāna* is ultimate reality.

By negative approach, the Upaniṣads discovered that Reality is beyond the senses and thought. One can easily see that it is beyond the senses, but how is it beyond thought also? There are two reasons for saying that it is beyond thought also. Firstly, thought or *vikalpa* always sunders Reality into two—animal and not-animal, cap and not-cap, white and not-white—separates its object—animal, cap, white, etc. from the not-animal, not-cap, not-white, etc.—and affirms it. It is, by its very nature, discursive, marked by analytical reasoning.

Secondly, thought is relational by nature, that is to say, thought has always a subject-object duality, nay, even triad, viz. knower, known, and knowledge. Reality is, however, unity of existence.

Thought, therefore, has to commit suicide in order to have an experience of Reality. Thought is mediate knowledge. There can be only an immediate experience—*aparokṣānubhūti* of Reality. By spiritual praxis or *sādhanā*, the Ṛṣis of the Upaniṣads became integrated to *Turīya*, the met-empirical Reality. Thus they developed *prajñā* in its highest sense, and had an experience of *ānanda* or

bliss in which knower, knowledge, and known become one.

As the Kaṭhopaniṣad puts it: अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन देवं मत्वा हर्षशोकौ जहाति (कठ I. 2. 12). By being united through the yoga pertaining to the Supreme Spirit, and having comprehended the Divine, one leaves joy and sorrow behind (and has the experience of bliss).

(b) *The Positive Approach*:

Having realized Brahman in immediate experience, the Upaniṣads also speak about Reality in positive terms.

The negative terms about Brahman in the Upaniṣads pertain generally to the *nirguṇa* or transcendent aspect and usually refer to Brahman in the neuter gender.

The positive terms refer to Brahman in the *saguṇa* aspect or in the aspect of manifestation where Brahman is treated as *deva* and is referred to usually in masculine gender.

The three basic positive terms are *sat*, *cit*, *ānanda*. They are not to be treated separately. They belong to the Divine simultaneously. These have to be described separately owing to the limitation of language.

The seers speak of Him in a double trilogy. Subjectively, He is *sat*, *cit*, *ānanda*—existence, consciousness, and bliss. Objectively, He is *satyaṁ*, *jñānam*, *anantaṁ*—truth, knowledge, and infinity.

He is *sat* or existence *par excellence*, for He exists by Himself. He is *svayambhū*, the Self-existent one. All things owe their existence to Him. Nothing exists outside Him. Space, time, causality are, to borrow a term from the German philosopher Kant, categories through which He manifests Himself as phenomena. यस्मिन्नु अक्षरे आकाश

ओतञ्च प्रोतञ्च–It is in the Imperishable that vast expanse of ether and space is contained; it is across Him that space is woven, warp and woof. (Bṛhad. III 8, 11).
Time also owes its existence to Him.

एतस्य वा अक्षरस्य प्रशासने गार्गि निमेषा मुहूर्ता अहोरात्राण्यर्धमासा मासा ऋतवः संवत्सरा इति विधृतास्तिष्ठन्ति । Bṛhad., III. 8. 9.

"Verily, Gargi, at the command of that Imperishable One, the moments, the hours, the days, the nights, the fortnights, the months, the seasons, and the years stand in their position."

He is the Absolute Existence, Consciousness, and Bliss. Consciousness and Bliss are not the attributes of existence, but its very nature. We have to use three words separately owing to the limitation of language. In reality, the Absolute existence is not simply existence but conscious and blissful existence.

Objectively, Brahman is Satyam. Satyaṁ is *sat* or existence viewed *objectively*. He exists by Himself. His existence does not depend on anything outside Himself. Therefore, He is Satyam, Absolute Reality.

Jñānaṁ is direct knowledge. Jñānaṁ is consciousness viewed objectively. He is Anantam. Anantam is Bliss viewed objectively. It includes three ideas, viz. immortality, universality, freedom. Brahman is transcendent to time, and therefore connotes immortality. He is transcendent to space and therefore connotes universality. He is transcendent to causality and therefore connotes freedom.

The Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad gives an excellent description of *saguṇa Brahman:*

नित्यं विभुं सर्वगतं सुसूक्ष्मं तद् अव्ययं यद् भूतयोनिं परिपश्यन्ति धीराः
I.1.6. "The wise regard Him as eternal, all-pervading,

omnipresent, excedingly subtle, imperishable, the source of beings."

These few quotations are enough to show the double aspect of Brahman, *nirguṇa* aspect about which we can speak only in negative terms, which serves as the background of Saguṇa Brahman, and the Saguṇa Brahman, the dynamic, creative Brahman known as Sacchidānanda.

(2) The Essence of the Human Being

This has been considered firstly from the analytical point of view, from the point of view of the *kośas*, viz. *annamaya kośa*, *prāṇamaya kośa*, *manomaya kośa*, *vijñānamaya kośa*, and *ānandamaya kośa*.

The *annamaya kośa* is the bodily organism; the *prāṇamaya kośa* is the vital vehicle, the *manomaya kośa*, the *vijñānamaya kośa* and the *ānandamaya kośa* are the psychic vehicles. These are vehicles of the Self. They cannot be called the Self. The *manomaya kośa*, the *vijñānamaya kośa*, and the *ānandamaya kośa* may at best constitute the psychological self or soul, but they cannot constitute the metaphysical Self, for they are all subject to change, whereas the metaphysical Self is, *ex-hypothesi*, beyond change.

How is the metaphysical self or ātmā to be discovered? This can be discovered only by examining the states of the self, viz. the waking state, the dream state, and the deep sleep state. In the waking state, the senses, both *jñānendriyas*, and *karmendriyas* are active. Among *jñānendriyas* is included the *manas* also.

In the dream state, the other *indriyas* become inactive, but *manas* is quite active, and it assumes the functions of the other *indriyas* or senses. In the dream state, it is not

only the reproductive imagination that is at work, but also constructive imagination that is prominent. It fashions or fabricates all kinds of new and odd experiences.

In the third or deep sleep state called *suṣupti*, both *manas* and *indriyas* or senses become quiescent and there is complete cessation of empirical consciousness. All objects disappear and even the contrast of the subject with the object is no longer there.

There is some sort of consciousness as is evident from the sense of personal identity connecting the states before and after sleep.

This state is free from all desire and is, therefore, one of unalloyed bliss.

In the *turīya* or fourth state reigns the Sākṣi-caitanya or witnessing consciousness which never ceases. Even in deep sleep state when the normal, empirical consciousness is completely obliterated, the *turīya* is present as consciousness which witnesses all the three states. This is the metaphysical Self or Ātmā or the true Self of man. This is his essential nature *par excellence*.

(3) The Relation of the Essence of the Human Being to Brahman

The question that now arises is "What is this Ātmā? What is its nature? In what way is it related to Brahman, the metaphysical Reality?"

It is obvious that there are two main questions connected with the concept of Ātmā—viz. (1) What is its essential nature? (2) How is it related to Brahman? We shall take up firstly the first question—What is the essential nature of Ātmā? The first point in answer to this question is that Ātmā is *caitanya* or pure consciousness,

consciousness not depending on the senses, *prāṇa*, *manas*, *buddhi*, or *ahaṁkāra*. Ātmā illumines these, they do not illumine it.

The second point is that it is *nityodita*. It is ever active. It never takes a holiday. It is ever-present *prakāśa* or spiritual light. Even darkness is known through the light of Ātmā.

The third point is that it is *Sākṣī* or witness to all that we do, feel, or think. It is the *ratio essendi* of the empirical self or our normal consciousness. It is the witness even to our deep sleep state.

The fourth point is that it is the eternal subject which can never be reduced to an object, the eternal knower that can never be reduced to the state of the known. It is the *draṣṭā* of all *dṛśya*, the *jñātā* of all *jñeya*, the *pramātā* of all *prameya*.

Therefore, it cannot be known as an object. विज्ञातारं अरे केन विजानीयात्—"By what can be the knower of all knowledge be known?" When one tries to know him as an object, one finds, to his utter chagrin, that even the attempt to know him as an object is not possible without his appearing as the knower. So the essential feature of the metaphysical Self is that it is only *draṣṭā*, never *dṛśya*, always *jñātā*, never *jñeya*.

We have seen that the so-called psychological self or empirical self is only a mind-body complex. It goes to sleep during *suṣupti* or sound, dreamless sleep. Therefore, this is not our true self. Our true self is the metaphysical Self which abides as a witnessing consciousness even in dreamless sleep.

As regards the relation of Ātmā to Brahman, the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad says categorically that all beings come from Brahman:

यथा सुदीप्तात् पावकात् विस्फुलिंगाः सहस्रशः प्रभवन्ते सरूपाः।
तथा अक्षराद् विविधाः सोम्य भावाः प्रजायन्ते तत्र चैवापि यन्ति ॥
२।१।१

"As, from a well-blazing fire, sparks of like form issue forth by the thousands, even so, my friend, the *jīvas* are produced from the Imperishable and also go there."

The following quotation from the Aitareya Upaniṣad is even more pronounced:

स एतमेव सीमानं विदार्यैतया द्वारा प्रापद्यत। सैषा विदृतिर्नाम ३।१२।

"By cleaving asunder the suture of the skull, he entered by that door. This is the door, named the suture of the skull".

So, Ātmā is Brahman Himself in the human body. In fact, Brahman and Ātmā are synonymous in the Upaniṣads. This is clear from the four *mahāvākyas* (great statements) of the Upaniṣads, viz. 1. सोऽहम्, 'That am I', 2. तत्त्वमसि, 'That thou art', 3. अयमात्मा ब्रह्म., 'This Atmā is Brahman', 4. अहं ब्रह्मास्मि, 'I am Brahman'.

It should be clearly borne in mind that *jīva* is not Ātmā. Jīva is the psychological or empirical Self. Ātmā is the met-empirical or metaphysical self. Jīva is Ātmā reflected in or conditioned by *buddhi*. Ātmā is also called Puruṣa, not in the popular sense of a human being, but in hermeneutic sense, '*puri śete iti puruṣaḥ*', i.e. Brahman, who abides in the *pura* or city of the body. The human body is known as *Brahmapura*, the tabernacle of God.

Brahman is *cidākāśa*, Ātmā is *cinmātra*, Jīva is *cidābhāsa*. The destiny of the Jīva is to become Brahman. As the Praśna Upaniṣad puts it: यथेमा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति, भिद्येते तासां नामरूपे, समुद्र इत्येवं प्रोच्यते। एवमेवास्य

परिद्रष्टुरिमाः षोडशकलाः पुरुषायणाः पुरुषं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति, भिद्येते तासां नामरूपे, पुरुष इत्येव प्रोच्यते। स एषोऽकलोऽमृतो भवति।
vi. 5.

"As the rivers that flow towards the ocean, having reached it, disappear; their name and form are destroyed and they are designated the ocean, even so of this spectator, these sixteen parts (5 organs of sense + 5 organs of action + *manas* + 5 *tanmātras*) that tend towards the *Puruṣa*, on reaching the *Puruṣa*, disappear; their name and form are destroyed and they are designated simply *Puruṣa*. That one continues partless and immortal."

The empirical self and the metaphysical Self dwell in the same body.

When the jīva recognizes the metaphysical Self, he is freed from sorrow. As the Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad puts it:

द्वा सुपर्णा सयुजा सखाया समानं वृक्षं परिषष्वजाते।
तयोरन्यः पिप्पलं स्वादु अत्ति, अनश्नन् अन्यो अभिचाकशीति ॥
समाने वृक्षे पुरुषो निमग्नः अनीशया शोचति मुह्यमानः।
जुष्टं यदा पश्यति अन्यमीशं अस्य महिमानं इति वीतशोकः ॥ ३।१।१

"Two beautiful birds, fast bound companions, clasp close the same tree. Of those two, the one eats sweet fruit. The other looks on without eating. On the same tree, the *jīva* is sunken and deluded, grieves because of impotence. When he sees the other, the Lord, contented, and realizes His greatness, he is freed from sorrow."

The psychological self loses the sense of autonomy and lordship and is therefore prey to sorrow. When he recognizes the metaphysical Self who is always contented as his real Self, he becomes freed from sorrow.

The question is how is it that Brahman entering the

body becomes deluded and considers his psycho-physical condition as his real Self.

The answer is 'it is due to *avidyā*', due to the forgetfulness of his true Self. It is a limitation imposed by Brahman upon Himself. He becomes a voluntary exile in order to realize better the sweetness of home.

(4) **The Relation of the World to Brahman.**

The Upaniṣads declare categorically that Brahman is the origin and end of the world. As the Chāndogya Upaniṣad puts it, सर्वं खल्विदं ब्रह्म, तज्जलान् (3, 14, 1). "All this is verily Brahman. Brahman is that from which everything proceeds, that in which everything breathes, Brahman is that in which everything is finally dissolved."

Taittirīya Upaniṣad says: यतो वा इमानि भूतानि जातानि, येन जातानि जीवन्ति, यत्प्रयन्त्यभिसंविशन्ति ।

"From Brahman are all beings born, and having been born, it is through Him that they are alive, and He it is to whom all beings return and in whom they are ultimately dissolved."

Māṇḍūkya says: एष योनिः सर्वस्य, प्रभवाप्ययौ हि भूतानाम् । "Brahman is the origin of all beings; all beings proceed from Him and are dissolved in Him."

There appear to be three moments in manifestation. First of all there is *sisṛkṣā*, the Will to manifest—एकोऽहं बहु स्याम्—May I be many! The second moment is the appearance of cosmic matter. The third moment is the entrance or immanence of Brahman in manifestation—तत् सृष्ट्वा तदेवानुप्राविशत् ।

Finally, the Upaniṣads speak of realization of Brahman by means of Sādhanā.

They emphasize *śraddhā* or faith, purity or purgation, introversion, and meditation. Two methods of meditation have been mainly recommended. The first is the meditation on Om. Om consisting of three phonemes, viz. a, u, m, and the *ardhamātrā* after m are the true representative of Brahman who appears as gross manifestation in the form of *Virāṭa*, as the primal manifestation in the *Īśvara*, as the absolute in the form of *Brahman*.

The other meditation is on the heart-centre. It is known as Dahara-Vidyā, recommended by the Chāndogya Upaniṣad:

अथ यदिदं अस्मिन् ब्रह्मपुरे दहरं पुण्डरीकं वेश्म, दहरोऽस्मिन् अन्तराकाशः तस्मिन् यदन्तः तद् अन्वेष्टव्यम्, तद् विजिज्ञासितव्यम् ।
८।१।१

"What is here in this city of Brahman is an abode, a small lotus-flower. Within that is a small space. That should be searched out, that is what one should desire to understand."

This is a description not of the physical heart but of the mystic heart. One has to meditate on it. This leads to the transformation of the empirical mind into the Divine.

II

THE PARA ADVAITA PHILOSOPHY OF ŚAIVĀGAMA

It is a religio-philosophical system which is elaborated mostly in the Pratyabhijñā darśana.

Pratyabhijñā is so called because the main emphasis in this philosophy is on the re-cognition of Self.

Śiva voluntarily adopts Self-veiling by His *tirodhāna śakti* and becomes a *jīva*. The problem for the *jīva* is to recognize his Self as Śiva.

The Pratyabhijñā philosophy first gives a description of ultimate Reality, shows how it descends to the level of the *jīva* or empirical individual and how the *jīva* can recognize himself as Śiva and become liberated.

The main principles of this philosophy may be described under the following heads:

1. Ultimate Reality

Most of the systems of Indian Philosophy recognize ultimate Reality as simply *prakāśa*, as self-luminous Light or *sva-prakāśa* which illumines everything in the world. But Śaiva Philosophy maintains that *parā saṁvit* or, *Cit* or ultimate Reality is not simply *prakāśa;* it is *prakāśa-vimarśamaya*. It is not simply spiritual Light but also creative Energy. *Vimarśa* is reviewing Energy of Śiva, His *kartṛtva śakti*. It is like a mirror in which Śiva sees His glory, His creative power, His beauty.

So there are two aspects of it—*consciousness* and *activity*. *Vimarśa* is the *conscious activity* of the Self.

As Kṣemarāja puts it in his Parāpraveśikā—*Vimarśa* is *akṛtrimāham iti visphuraṇam*. It is the non-relational, immediate awareness of I. *Vimarśa* is the Self-surveying of Self.

If ultimate Reality were simply *prakāśa*, and not also *vimarśa*, it would be powerless and inert. In the words of Kṣemarāja, *Yadi nirvimarśaḥ syāt, anīśvaro jaḍaśca prasajyeta*.

The awareness of *cit* as *cidrūpiṇī śakti* is *vimarśa*. Therefore *vimarśa* has been described by Kṣemarāja as *parā śakti, parāvāk, svātantrya, aiśvarya, kartṛtva, sphurattā, sāra, hṛdaya, spanda*.

The all-inclusive Universal consciousness is also called *Anuttara*, the Highest Reality, the Absolute *Cit* or the Absolute Self, the changeless principle of all changes. Śiva and Śakti are not different. It is the same Absolute which from one point of view is Śiva, from another Śakti. From the point of view of *prakāśa*, Śiva is *viśvottīrṇa* or transcendent to the universe. From the point of view of *vimarśa* or *śakti*, he is *viśvamaya* or immanent in the universe.

It is because of *svātantrya śakti*, His autonomy, that Parama Śiva appears both as experient and object of experience. This appearance or *ābhāsa* of Parama Śiva is not *pariṇāma* or transformation, not *vikāra* or change. It is simply the expression of His *svātantrya*, His unimpeded sovereignty.

Caitanyam in this system does not mean simply consciousness. It means awareness of a *cetana* or conscious Reality that has the absolute freedom of knowledge and activity. It is *caitanya* which is the nature of Reality.

Its essential nature is *cit* (consciousness) and *ānanda*

or bliss. It expresses itself in *icchā* or will, *jñāna* or knowledge, and *kriyā* or activity.

2. Svātantryavāda

The Absolute in this system is known as *Cit* or *Parama Śiva* or *Maheśvara* or *Anuttara*.

It is called Maheśvara because of its absolute sovereignty of will—*svatantratā* or *svātantrya*. *Svātantrya* is the *svabhāva* or own-being of the Absolute. It is this sovereign Free Will that brings about the objectification of the ideation of the Absolute. It is free as it does not depend on anything else outside itself.

It is beyond space, time, causality, etc., for they owe their own existence to it.

चितिः प्रत्यवमर्शात्मा परावाक् स्वरसोदिता ।
स्वातंत्र्यमेतन्मुख्यं तदैश्वर्यं परमात्मनः ।।

Īśvara Pr. I, pp. 203-4

"The Divine Power is known as *citi*. Its essence is Self-consciousness. It is known as Parā Vāk, the Supreme Word. It is by its own nature ever-present. It is *svātantrya*, the main power of the Supreme Self."

Parā Vāk, Vimarśa, Aiśvarya, etc. are only synonyms of *svātantrya*.

सा स्फुरत्ता महासत्ता देशकालाविशेषिणी ।
सैषा सारतया प्रोक्ता हृदयं परमेष्ठिनः ।।

"*Citi* or power of consciousness is the creative flash of light, the Highest Being, free from the determination of space and time. In brief, this free sovereign Will may be said to be the very heart of the Supreme."

Svātanntrya connotes unimpeded activity of the Divine Will.

स्वातंत्र्यं नाम यथेच्छं, तत्रेच्छाप्रसरस्य अनिघात: ।

Svātantrya means being able to do according to one's will, the unrestrained expression of the Divine Will. Svātantrya-vāda or the doctrine of the free expression of the Divine Will has been beautifully expressed by Abhinavagupta :

तस्मादनपह्नवनीयः प्रकाशविमर्शात्मा संवित्स्वभावः परमशिवो भगवान् स्वातंत्र्यादेव रुद्रादिस्थावरान्त-प्रमातृरूपतया नीलसुखादि-प्रमेयरूपतया च अनतिरक्ततयापि अतिरिक्ततया इव स्वरूपानाच्छादिकया संविद्रूपनान्तरीयकस्वातंत्र्यमहिम्ना प्रकाशत इति अयं स्वातंत्र्यवादः प्रोन्मीलितः ।

"Therefore the Lord, Parama Śiva (the Absolute Reality), whose being is consciousness of the nature of Prakāśa and Vimarśa, who, as the undeniable, ever-present Reality, appears as subject from Rudra down to immovable entities, as objects like blue, pleasure, etc., which appear as if separate, though in essence they are not separate, through the glorious might of Svātantrya (Free Will) which is inseparable from Saṁvit (universal consciousness) and which does not conceal in any way the nature of the Supreme. This is the exposition of Svātantrya-vāda (the doctrine of Svātantrya)."

3. Ābhāsavāda

From the point of view of the creativity of the Divine, this system is known as *svātantryavāda;* from the point of view of manifestation, it is known as *ābhāsavāda*.

In the Ultimate Reality, the entire objective world

lies as an undifferentiated mass identically with the ideation of Parama Śiva, just as the varied plumage of the peacock with all its rich colour lies in an undifferentiated mass in the plasma of its egg.

This is known as the analogy of the plasma of the peacock's egg (*mayūrāṇḍa-rasa-nyāya*) in Śaiva Philosophy.

The underlying principle of all manifestation is *cit* or the Universal Consciousness. The entire manifestation of subjects and objects together with the means of knowledge lies *en masse* in the consciousness of the Divine. Manifestation only means appearance of that reality as objects to the empirical subjects. Everything whether subject or object is an *ābhāsa* of the universal consciousness. The word *ābhāsa* is a component of two factors, *ā* and *bhāsa*. *Ā* means *īṣat*, i.e. *saṅkocena* or in a limited way, and *bhāsaḥ* means *bhāsanam* or *prakāśanā*, i.e. appearance. So *ābhāsa* means manifestation or appearance in a limited, polarized way.

Everything in existence is a configuration of *ābhāsas*. This system uses the analogy of a mirror to explain these *ābhāsas*.

दर्पणबिम्बे यद्वन् नगरग्रामादिचित्रमविभागि ।
भाति विभागेनैव च परस्परं दर्पणादपि च ॥
विमलतमपरमभैरवबोधात् तद्वत् विभागशून्यमपि ।
अन्योन्यं च ततोऽपि च विभक्तमाभाति जगदेतत् ॥

Paramārthasāra, 12-13.

"Just as in a clear mirror, varied images of city, village, etc. appear as different from one another and from the mirror, though they are non-different from the mirror, even so the world, though non-different from purest cons-

ciousness of Parama Bhairava (Śiva), appears as different both in respect of its varied objects and that universal consciousness. Just as reflection in a mirror is not something different from the mirror, but appears as different, even so *ābhāsas* are not different from Śiva and yet appear as different."

Two exceptions have, however, to be noted in this analogy. In the case of the mirror, there is an external object that is reflected, but in the case of Maheśvara, it is His own ideation that is reflected as the universe. In the case of the mirror, there is an external light owing to which reflection is possible; in the case of the Universal consciousness, it is its own light that brings about the reflection.

Secondly, the mirror being non-conscious does not know the reflections within itself, but the Universal consciousness knows its own ideation.

Ābhāsas are simply the ideation of the Universal consciousness appearing as external to the empirical subjects. They are only external projections of the ideation of the Divine.

चिदात्मैव हि देवोऽन्तःस्थितमिच्छावशाद्बहिः ।
योगीव निरुपादानमर्थजातं प्रकाशयेत् ।

Īś. Pr. 5, 7.

"The Divine being whose essence is *Cit* makes the collection of objects that are internally contained appear outside by His Will without any external material even as a Yogi (makes his mental object appear outside by his mere will)."

The Divine being does not create like a pot-maker shaping clay into pots. He simply manifests outside what

is contained within Him. *Sṛṣṭi* is derived from the root *sṛj* which means to let go, to project.

Things which are identical with the Divine Being's knowledge or *jñāna* appear by His Will as *jñeya* or objects. Things which are identical with His Self or I appear as *this* or the universe.

It is the Universal consciousness itself that appears in the form of subjects and objects. Therefore, this appearance cannot be called false. This appearance, however, makes no difference to the fullness or perfection of the Universal consciousness.

Svātantryavāda of this philosophy stands in contradiction to *vivartavāda*, and *ābhāsavāda* to *pariṇāmavāda*.

4. Ṣaḍadhvā

The activity of *parā śakti* is described also from another point of view. It manifests initially as *parā vāk*. The whole universe consisting of subjective and objective order is a proliferation of *parā vāk* under six forms known as *ṣaḍadhvā* which means six courses.

Three of them are under the *vācaka* aspect which means the subjective or *grāhaka* aspect of manifestation, and the other three are under the *vācya* or the objective aspect.

At the level of *parā vāk*, *vācaka* and *vācya*, i.e. the word and the referent, are in an indistinguishable unity.

The first *adhvā* or step of this differentiations is the polarity of *varṇa* and *kalā*.

Varṇa, at this stage, does not mean letter, or colour, or class. *Varṇa* means the characteristic measure-index of the function-form associated with the object. *Varṇa* is the function-form; *kalā* is the predicable.

This *adhvā* is known as *parā* or supreme or *abheda*, for

at this stage, there is no difference between a *varṇa* and *kalā*.

The next *adhvā* or step in the creative descent is the polarity of *mantra* and *tattva*. This level of creativity is known as *parāpara* or *bhedābheda* or *sūkṣma*. *Mantra* is the basic formula of *tattva; tattva* is the principle or source and origin of the subtle structural forms.

The third or final polarity is that of *pada* and *bhuvana*. This level of manifestation is known as *apara* or *bheda* or *sthūla* (total difference between the *vācaka* and *vācya*). *Bhuvana* is the universe as it appears to apprehending centres. *Pada* is the actual formulation of that universe by mind-reaction and speech.

The *ṣaḍadhvā* may be arranged in the following tabular form:

Vācaka	*Vācya or artha*
The subjective order or The temporal order or The phonetic manifestation	The objective order or The spatial order or The cosmogonic manifestation
1. The *para or abheda* level— Varṇa	Kalā
2. *Parāpara* or *bhedābheda*— Mantra	Tattva
3. *Apara* or *bheda* or *sthūla*— Pada	Bhuvana

Varṇādhvā is of the nature of *pramā*. It is the resting

place of *prameya* (object), *pramāṇa* (means of knowledge). and *pramātā* (experient).

Varṇa is of two kinds—non-*māyīya* and *māyīya*, i.e. metempircal and empirical. The *Vācaka-śakti* of non-*māyīya varṇas* is inherent in the *māyīya varṇas* even as power of burning is inherent in fire.

5. **Manifestation or the World-process**

Ultimate reality is consciousness which has infinite powers and contains in a potential form all that is likely to be.

It is the *svabhāva* or nature of ultimate reality to manifest. If ultimate reality did not manifest, it would no longer be consciousness or self, but something like an object or not-self.

As Abhinavagupta puts it:

अस्थास्यदेकरूपेण वपुषा चेन्महेश्वरः ।
महेश्वरत्वं संवित्त्वं तदत्यक्षद् घटादिवत् ।।

"If the Highest Reality did not manifest infinite variety but remained cooped up within its solid singleness, it would be neither the Highest Power nor consciousness, but something like a jar."

Parama Śiva or *Anuttara* is *prakāśa-vimarśamaya* or *Śiva-śakti*. The *vimarśa* is *svātantrya* or *spanda-śakti*, a dynamic, creative power of *Śiva*. The *vimarśa* or *śakti* contains all that is to be.

यथा न्यग्रोधबीजस्थः शक्तिरूपो महाद्रुमः ।
तथा हृदयबीजस्थं विश्वमेतच्चराचरम् ।।

Parātrīśikā, 24

"As the great banyan tree lies only in the form of

potency in the seed, even so the entire universe with all the mobile and immobile beings lies as a potency in the heart of the supreme."

The *Śakti* of the supreme is called *citi*. *Citi* means the activity of cognizing. It is also known as *parā śakti*. This expresses itself in the following main powers:

Cit: the power of self-revelation. In this aspect, the supreme is known as *śiva*.

Ānanda: This means absolute bliss. In this aspect, the absolute is known as *śakti*.

Cit and ānanda are the very svarūpa or nature of the supreme.

Icchā: The will to do this or that. In this aspect the absolute is known as *sadāśiva*.

Jñāna or the power of knowing. In this aspect, He is known as *Īśvara*.

Kriyā: the power of assuming any and every form (*Sarvākāra-yogitvaṁ kriyāśaktiḥ*): In this aspect, he is known as *Śuddha-vidyā*.

Manifestation may be considered under the following heads:

I. The Tattvas of Universal Experience : i-v

(i) *Śiva-tattva* is the initial creative movement of Paramaśiva.

(ii) *Śakti-tattva* is the Energy of Śiva. Śakti is the Principle of negation. She negates the 'this' or the objective side of experience.

In *cit*, the 'I' and 'this' are in an indistinguishable unity. Śakti polarizes consciousness into *aham* and *idam*—I and this. Śakti, however, is nothing separate from Śiva. She is His *ahaṁ vimarśa* or I-consciousness, His *un-*

mukhatā or intentness to create. As Maheśvarānanda puts it beautifully in Mahārthamañjarī:

स एव विश्वमेषितुं ज्ञातुं कर्तुं चोन्मुखं भवन् ।
शक्तिस्वभावः कथितो हृदयत्रिकोणमधुमांसकोल्लासः ॥

"He (i.e. Śiva) Himself full of joy enhanced by the honey of the three corners of his heart, viz. Icchā, Jñāna, and Kriyā, raising up His face to gaze at His own splendour is called Śakti."

Śakti is the active or kinetic aspect of consciousness. Just as an artist pours out his delight in a poem, picture, or song, even so the supreme pours out His delight in manifestation. Kṣemarāja gives expression to the same idea in the following words:

आनन्दोच्छलिता शक्तिः सृजत्यात्मानमात्मना—"Sakti thrown up by delight lets Herself go forth into manifestation."

In Śakti-tattva, ānanda aspect of the supreme is predominant. Śiva and śakti-tattva can never be disjoined.

Strictly speaking, śiva-śakti-tattva is not an emanation or *ābhāsa*, but the seed of all emanation.

(iii) *Sadāśiva or Sādākhya Tattva:*

The Will to affirm the 'this' side of experience is known as *sadāśiva* or *sādākhya-tattva*. In sadāśiva, Icchā or Will is predominant.

The experience of this stage is 'I am this,' but the' this' is only a hazy (*asphuṭa*) experience. The predominant side is still 'I'. The ideal universe is experienced as an indistinct something in the depth of consciousness. The emphasis is on the 'I' side of experience. The 'this' or the universe is like a hazy idea of the picture that an artist has at the initial stage of his creation.

Sadāśiva-tattva is the first *ābhāsa* or manifestation. Consciousness at this stage is perceptible to itself.

(iv) *Īśvara or Aiśvarya Tattva:*

The next stage of Divine experience is that where 'Idam' or the 'this' side of the total experience becomes a little more defined (*sphuṭa*). This is known as *Īśvara-tattva*.

At this stage, the objective side of experience is a little more defined. Therefore, *Jñāna-śakti* is predominant.

The experience of Sadāśiva is, 'I am *this*'. The experience of Īśvara is '*This* am I'.

(v) *Sadvidyā- or Śuddhavidyā-Tattva:*

In the *Śuddhavidyā-tattva*, the 'I' and the 'this' side of experience are equally balanced like the two pans of an evenly held balance (*sama-dhṛta-tulāpuṭa-nyāyena*). At this stage, *Kriyāśakti* is predominant. The 'I' and 'this' are recognized in this state with such equal clarity that while both 'I' and 'this' are still identified, they can be clearly distinguished in thought.

The experience of this stage may be called diversity in unity. In Śiva-tattva, there is the I-experience; in Sadāśiva, there is the I-this experience; in Īśvara-tattva, there is this-I experience. In Śuddhavidyā, there is equal emphasis on both.

Up to this stage, all experience is ideal, i.e. in the form of an idea. Hence, it is called the pure order, or *Śuddha adhvā*, i.e. a manifestation in which the *svarūpa* or real nature of the Divine is not yet veiled.

II. The Tattvas of Individual Experience : vi-xi

Māyā and the five kañcukas

(vi) Now *Māyā-tattva* begins its play. From this stage

onwards, there is Aśuddhādhvā or order in which the real nature of the Divine is concealed. All this happens because of Māyā and her *kañcukas*. Māyā is derived from the root 'mā' which means 'to measure out'. That which makes experience measurable, i.e. limited, and severs 'this' from 'I' and 'I' from 'this' and excludes things from one another is Māyā.

Up to *śuddhavidyā*, the experience was universal. The 'this' meant 'all-this'—the total universe. Under the operation of Māyā 'this' means merely different from everything else.

From now starts *saṅkoca* or limitation. Māyā draws a veil over the self owing to which one forgets one's real nature, and thus Māyā generates a sense of difference.

(vii-xi) The products of Māyā are the five *kañcukas* or coverings. We may notice them briefly.

Kalā—This reduces the *sarvakartṛtva* (universal authorship) of the universal consciousness and brings about limitation in respect of authorship or efficacy.

Vidyā—This reduces the omniscience (sarvajñatva) of the universal consciousness and brings about limitation in respect of knowledge.

Rāga—This reduces the all-satisfaction (*pūrṇatva*) of the universal and brings about desire for this or that.

Kāla—This reduces the eternity (*nityatva*) of the universal and brings about limitation in respect of time, i.e. division of past, present, and future.

Niyati—This reduces the freedom and pervasiveness (*svatantratā* and *vyāpakatva*) of the universal, and brings about limitation in respect of cause and effect.

It is interesting to note that Trika philosophy had anticipated the German philosopher, Kant, in the analysis

of experience. Kant maintained that experience consists of synthetic judgements which are characterized by necessity and universality. Necessity and universality are not products of experience. They are *a priori*, i.e. prior to experience. Senses provide only the data of experience, but understanding imposes its own laws on the data of experience to transform them into synthetic, harmonious whole of knowledge. Kant called these laws categories. These are inherent in the very constitution of mind.

Kant maintains that all our experiences are determined by space and time. Trika philosophy also maintains that all our experiences are limited by *kāla* and *niyati*.

The very word Māyā means that power by which experience is measured in a particular way.

Kant's category of relation is included in Niyati. His categories of quantity, quality, and modality come under the *kañcuka-vidyā*. Kalā and Rāga have no parallel in Kant's system.

III. The Tattvas of the Limited Individual : xii-xiii

(xii) *Puruṣa* : Śiva through Māyāśakti which limits his power of knowledge and activity becomes Puruṣa. Puruṣa means every sentient being.

(xiii) *Prakṛti* : While Puruṣa is the subjective manifestation of Śiva, Prakṛti is the objective manifestation. Prakṛti has three *guṇas* or genetic constituents, viz. *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*.

IV. The Tattvas of Mental Operation : xiv-xvi

Buddhi, *Ahaṁākra*, and *Manas*

Prakṛti differentiates into *antaḥkaraṇa* (the psychic apparatus), *indriyas* (senses), and *bhūtas* (matter).

Antaḥkaraṇa means the psychic apparatus of the individual. It consists of the tattvas—*buddhi, ahaṁkāra*, and *manas*.

(xiv) *Buddhi* is the ascertaining intelligence. The objects that are reflected in *buddhi* are of two kinds—(a) external, e.g. a jar which is perceived through the eye, (b) internal—the images built out of the *saṁskāras* (the impressions left behind on the mind).

(xv) *Ahaṁkāra*. This is the product of *buddhi*. It is the I-making principle and the power of self-appropriation.

(xvi) *Manas*. It is the product of *ahaṁkāra*. It co-operates with the senses in building up perceptions, and by itself, it builds images and concepts.

V-VII. The Tattvas of Sensible Experience : xvii-xxxi

(xvii-xxi) The five powers of sense-perception or *jñānendriyas* which are products of *ahaṁkāra*.

(xxii-xxvi) The five *karmendriyas* or powers of action which are also products of *ahaṁkāra*.

(xxvii-xxxi) The five *tanmātras* or primary elements of perception which are also products of *ahaṁkāra*.

VIII. The Tattvas of Materiality : xxxii-xxxvi

The five Bhūtas.

The five gross elements or the *pañca mahābhūtas* are the products of the five *tanmātras*.

The Individual Self or Jīva

Caitanya or *Śiva* forms the very core of the being of each individual. It is the real Self.

The physical body of the individual consists of the *pañca mahābhūtas* or the five gross elements.

There is also *prāṇa-śakti* working in him.

The *buddhi*, *ahaṁkāra*, and *manas* with the five *tanmātras* constitute the *puryaṣṭaka* or the subtle body of the individual.

In each individual, there is kuṇḍalinī which is a form of śakti and lies in three and a half folds at the base of the spine.

Each individual has an experience of three states of consciousness, viz. waking, dream, and deep sleep.

There is, however, a fourth state of consciousness, known as *turīya*. It is pure *cidānanda*—consciousness and bliss of which the individual is normally not aware.

6. **Bondage**

The bondage of the individual is due to innate ignorance or *āṇava mala*. It is the primary limiting condition which reduces the individual to an *aṇu* or limited creature. It comes about by the limitation of the *icchā-śakti* of the Supreme.

In association with *aśuddha adhvā*, he becomes further limited by *māyīya* and *kārma mala*. Māyīya mala is the limited condition brought about by *māyā*. It is *bhinna vedya prathā* which brings about the consciousness of difference. This comes about by the limitation of *jñāna-śakti* of the Supreme.

Āṇavamala leads to Kārmamala, e.g. good or evil actions. This leads to *māyīya* mala which brings about the experience of pleasure, pain, birth, and death due to the *vāsanās* or habit-energies of good and evil actions. It is the force of the *vāsanās* that carries the *jīvas* from one life to another.

7. **Liberation**

Liberation, according to the system, means *pratyabhijñā* or recognition of one's true nature which means *akṛtrima-ahaṁ-vimarśa*, the original, pure I-consciousness. The pure I-consciousness is immediate, non-relational awareness. To be integrated to the divine I is liberation.

As Abhinavagupta puts it:

मोक्षो हि नाम नैवान्यः स्वरूपप्रथनं हि तत्—Tantra I, p. 192.

"Mokṣa or liberation is nothing else but the awareness of one's true nature."

The highest attainment, however, is that of Śiva-consciousness in which the entire universe appears as I or Śiva.

Upāyas:

It is not simply by intellectual understanding that one gains awareness of true I-consciousness.

There has to be *Śakti-pāta*—the descent of Divine Śakti or *anugraha* or grace.

In order to earn grace, one has to undergo spiritual discipline. This is known as *upāya* or *yoga*. The *upāyas* are divided under four heads, viz. (I) Anupāya, (II) Śāmbhavopāya, (III) Śāktopāya, and (IV) Āṇavopāya.

I. *Anupāya*

The prefix as in *anupāya* means 'slight'. When, through extreme *śaktipāta*, the aspirant realizes the Self and gets absorbed in the divine consciousness without any particular effort simply by once hearing a word from the *guru*, one is said to have attained Self-realization through *anupāya*.

II. *Śāmbhavopāya*

This is also known as icchopāya, abhedopāya, avikalpaka or nirvikalpa yoga.

It is called *icchopāya,* because it comes about by a mere orientation of the Will. It is called *abhedopāya,* because it brings about a complete identification of 'I' and 'Śiva'. It is called *nirvikalpa* upāya, for the mystic experience of the union of jīva and Śiva occurs when there is complete cessation of all thought-constructs.

Śāmbhava yoga is that (1) in which there is a sudden flash of the I-consciousness of Śiva (2) in which all ideation ceases completely (3) which occurs to those whose entire consciousness is in the inner Bhairava principle.

III. *Śāktopāya*

In Śāṃbhava upāya, one has to resort to Śambhu as *prakāśa.* That is why it is called Śāmbhavopāya.

In *Śaktopāya,* one has to resort to *cit-sakti* or *vimarśa-sakti* for realization. Therefore, this is called *Śaktopāya. Śāktopāya* is also known as *jñānopāya, bhāvanopāya, mantropāya.*

Śāktopāya consists mostly in *Mantra-śakti, Sattarka, Bhāvanā,* and *Śuddha-vidyā.*

Mantra-śakti

Since *vikalpa* or thought-construct is the very nature of mind, it cannot become completely *vikalpa*-free. Therefore, the best way is to catch hold of one *śuddha vikalpa,* viz. I am Śiva, and ruminate over it through *mantra.*

What is *mantra*? *Mantra* is not simply a conglomeration of letters recorded in a book. It is, really speaking, awareness at a higher level of mind of the veiled *ātmaśakti,*

the energy of the *met-empirical I-consciousness* which is divine.

As Kṣemarāja puts it in his commentary on the first sūtra of the second section of Śiva-sūtras:

मंत्रदेवताविमर्शपरत्वेन प्राप्ततत्सामरस्यं आराधकचित्तमेव मंत्रः, न तु विचित्रवर्णसंघट्टतामात्रम् ।

"The mind of the devotee intent on intensive awareness of the deity inherent in the *mantra* acquires identity with that deity and thus becomes that itself."

स च एवंरूपः समस्तेभ्यः परिच्छिन्नस्वभावेभ्यः शिवान्तेभ्यः तत्त्वेभ्यो यत् उत्तीर्णम् अपरिच्छिन्नसंविन्मात्ररूपं तदेव च परमार्थः तदेव चाहम् । अतो विश्वोत्तीर्णो विश्वात्मा च अहम् इति ।

"That which is unlimited consciousness transcending all limited expressions of Reality from the earth right up to Śiva category, that alone is the highest Reality; that am I. Therefore, I am both transcendent to and immanent in the universe."

The practice of this Śuddha vikalpa is śāktopāya. *Śakti* assumes the form of *mantra*. Since I-consciousness is the *śakti* of Śiva, pondering over that Śakti is *śāktopāya* which brings about the absorption of the individual Self in the Divine Self of Śiva.

Sat-tarka

About *sat-tarka*, Abhinavagupta says in Tantrasāra (p. 23) तथाविधविकल्पप्रबन्ध एव सत्तर्क इति उक्तः—i.e. "*Sat-tarka* is the reflection that re-inforces continuity of ideas similar to the śuddha vikalpa." *Sat-tarka* leads to *bhāvanā*. Bhāvanā is creative contemplation.

Bhāvanā

Abhinavagupta defines *bhāvanā* in the following words अस्फुटत्वात् भूतमिव अर्थम् अभूतमिव स्फुटत्वापादनेन भाव्यते यथा। "*Bhāvanā* is that contemplation which enforces clarity of a thing which though real and existent appeared as non-existent and unreal previously owing to obscurity." Constructive imagination plays an important role in *bhāvanā*.

Śuddha-Vidyā

Bhāvanā leads to Śuddha-vidyā. This makes manifest the light of supreme I-consciousness. With the appearance of *śuddhavidyā*, *jñeya* or object of knowledge appears as a form of *jñāna* (knowledge). *Jñāna* terminates in the *jñātā* or the knower. Finally, this is displaced by the transcendental I-consciousness in which the distinction between the *jñātā*, *jñāna*, and *jñeya* totally disappears.

IV. *Āṇavopāya*

For those who are not competent to practise Śāktopāya, there is āṇavopāya. *Aṇu* means the psychological self, the mind-body complex. It is because this discipline starts from the mind-body complex that it is known as āṇavopāya. It is also called *kriyopāya* and *bhedopāya*.

These *upāyas* are not watertight compartments. Generally, one passes into the other.

Usually, the support of the *citta* of the individual practising āṇavopāya is either his (1) *buddhi*, (2) gross *prāṇa*, (3) subtle prāṇa known as *varṇa*, (4) the body and the disposition of its organs in particular ways, known as *karaṇa*, or (5) some external object known as *sthāna-kalpanā*.

Abhinavagupta has devoted three parts of his *Tantrāloka* in describing all these practices. It is not possible to describe all these practices in a paper like this. We shall describe only *varṇayoga* which is very important and which was practised by most of the aspirants in India.

Varṇayoga is concerned with the *uccāra* of the general *prāṇa*. Abhinavagupta says:

उक्तो य एव उच्चारस्तत्र योऽसौ स्फुरन् स्थितः ।
अव्यक्तानुकृतिप्रायो ध्वनिर्वर्णः स कथ्यते ॥

(Tantrāloka V. 131)

"From the *uccāra* of this general *prāṇa*, there vibrates an imperceptible, inarticulate sound which is known as *varṇa*."

This goes on *naturally* and *continuously* in every living creature. Svacchanda Tantra says:

नास्योच्चारयिता कश्चित्प्रतिहन्ता न विद्यते ।
स्वयमुच्चरते देवः प्राणिनामुरसि स्थितः ॥

"No one sounds it voluntarily, nor can any one prevent its being sounded. The deity abiding in the heart of living creatures sounds it himself."

Abhinavagupta says about it:

एको नादात्मको वर्णः सर्ववर्णाविभागवान् ।
सोऽनस्तमितरूपत्वादनाहत इहोदितः ॥ (Tan. 6, 216)

"There is one *varṇa* which is *nāda* in which lie all the *varṇas* (letters) latently without distinction. As it is causeless, it is called *anāhata*, i.e. unstruck, natural, uncaused."

By *anusandhāna* or mental observation of the above process, *prāṇa* and *apāna* become equilibrated and then the dormant *kuṇḍalinī* that lies in three and a half folds at

the base of the spine rises upwards. At that time, a number of pleasant sounds are heard.

By dwelling on this *nāda*, the *citta* gets dissolved and then one can have the experience of *viśuddha caitanya*.

The *kuṇḍalinī* that rises passes through the various *cakras*, finally joins *sahasrāra cakra*.

The *nāda* is subtle in *madhyamā* stage and finally when it reaches the *paśyantī* stage, it is no longer audible. The experient has now the experience of *jyotiḥ* (light). All the *vikalpas* are calmed and one can have the experience of *pūrṇāhantā* or the supreme I-consciousness.

III

COMPARISON OF VEDĀNTA AND ADVAITA ŚAIVA PHILOSOPHY

The Advaita Vedānta Philosophy is generally known as Śāntabrahmavāda or Kevalādvaita. The philosophy of Kashmir is known as Īśvarādvayavāda or Pratyabhijñā or Trika.

The Nature of Absolute Reality

1. The most salient difference between the two is that according to Vedānta, the Absolute Reality is simply *Prakāśa* or *Jñāna*, whereas according to Īśvarādvayavāda, it is *prakāśa-vimarśamaya*, i.e. it has both *jñātṛtva* and *kartṛtva*. Śaṅkara thinks that *kriyā* or activity belongs only to *Jīva* or the empirical individual, and not to Brahman. Śaṅkara takes *kriyā* in a very narrow sense. He takes it as synonymous with *karma*. Certainly, *parama śiva* does not act like a pot-maker moulding clay into pots. Śaivāgama takes *kriyā* in a wide sense, in the sense of *citi-śakti*, in the sense of *spanda*, throb or pulsation to manifest.

Without activity, the Absolute would be simply inert, unable to bring about anything.

Śaṅkara says: "All activity belongs to *māyā*." But is Māyā simply a Śakti of Brahman or is it something quite external? If *māyā* is something quite external, then *advaita* cannot be maintained. If *māyā* is *śakti* of Brahman, then surely, it is an *activity* of Brahman.

According to Śaivāgama, *svātantrya* or autonomous Free Will is an important characteristic of *caitanya*. Kartṛtva is an important aspect of svātantrya. As Pāṇini puts it: *Svatantraḥ kartā*, a free being alone is an agent. *Svātantrya* of Śiva implies *kartṛtva*.

According to Śāntabrahmavāda, Brahman is entirely inactive. Activity belongs to *avidyā*. When Brahman is associated with *avidyā*, it becomes Īśvara who is endowed with the power to act. So the real activity belongs to *avidyā*. The activity of Īśvara ceases when He is dissociated from *avidyā*. This is what Śaṅkara says in his commentary on Brahmasūtra:

तदेवमविद्यात्मकोपाधिपरिच्छेदापेक्षमेवेश्वरस्येश्वरत्वं
सर्वज्ञत्वं सर्वशक्तिमत्वं च. न परमार्थतो
विद्ययापास्तसर्वोपाधिस्वरूपे आत्मनीशित्रीशितव्य-
सर्वज्ञत्वादिव्यवहार उपपद्यते । (Br. sū. 2.1.14)

"Thus the potency of Īśvara, His omniscience and omnipotence are contingent upon the limitation caused by the condition or association of *avidyā* (primal ignorance). In the highest sense, when all conditions are removed by *vidyā* (spiritual illumination) from the Ātmā, the use of potency, omniscience, etc. would become inappropriate for it."

On the other hand, *jñātṛtva* and *kartṛtva* are, according to Īśvarādvayavāda, the very nature of the supreme. Activity, according to this philosophy, is not an adjunct of Īśvara, but His specific nature. His activity is summed up in the five-fold act of manifestation (*sṛṣṭi*), maintenance (*sthiti*), withdrawal (*saṁhāra*), concealment of the real nature (*vilaya*), and grace (*anugraha*). He

performs these five acts eternally even when He assumes the form of an empirical ego (*jīva*).

Maheśvarānanda says in his *Mahārtha-mañjarī* that inactive Brahman is as good as unreal.

तथाहि परमेश्वरस्य अयमेवासाधारणस्वभावो
यत् सर्वदा सृष्ट्यादिपञ्चकारित्वम् ।
एतदनङ्गीकाराद्धि मायावेदान्तादिनिर्णीतस्यात्मनः
स्वस्फुरणामोदमान्द्यलक्षणमसत्कल्पत्वमापतितम् ।

(Mahārtha-manjarī, p. 52)

"This is the specific nature of Parmeśvara that He always performs the five-fold act of *sṛṣṭi* etc. If this is not accepted, Ātmā as defined by Māyā-Vedānta etc., characterized by the want of the slightest trace of activity, would be as good as unreal."

According to Śaṅkara, Brahman is entirely inactive; all activity is due to *māyā*. According to Īśvarādvayavāda, activity belongs to Śiva or Īśvara; *māyā* derives its activity only from Him.

Secondly, *māyā*, according to Śāntabrahmavāda, is *anirvacanīya* or indefinable, but according to Īśvarādvayavāda, *māyā* being the *śakti* of Śiva is perfectly real and brings about multiplicity or difference.

Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad equates *māyā* with *prakṛti* :

मायां तु प्रकृतिं विद्यान्मायिनं तु महेश्वरम् ।

The word *māyā* is derived from the root 'mā' which means 'to measure'. Māyā is that power of the Divine which measures out the phenomenon in definite forms. Māyā is the creative power of the Divine. Māyā is not a power of illusion.

The Status of the World

The world, according to Śaṅkara, is *mithyā* or false. It is simply an *adhyāropa* or *adhyāsa* or false imposition on Brahman due to *ajñāna* or nescience just as a snake is a false imposition on a rope.

In none of the Upaniṣads which form the original, real Vedānta, the *rajju-sarpa* or rope-snake analogy is to be found. Nor anywhere in the Upaniṣads has the world been designated as *adhyāropa* or *adhyāsa* Śaṅkara has borrowed it from Nāgārjuna.

The problem for *advaita* is: 'How does the one Brahman become many'? Sri Aurobindo rightly says that Śaṅkara cut the Gordian knot by dismissing the world as illusion. MM. Dr Gopinath Kaviraj says that according to *adhyāsa*, Śaṅkara's *advaita* becomes exclusive *advaita*, an advaita by excluding the world.

For Advaita Śaivāgama, the world is an *ābhāsa*, but *ābhāsa* or appearance is real. The *ābhāsas* only prove the glory and richness of Śiva. The world lies only as a potency in Śiva, just as a banyan tree lies as potency or śakti in the seed. Manifestation only means making explicit what is implicit. Variety is not contradictory to unity. The Advaita Śaivāgama maintains that *pariṇāma-vāda* and *vivartavāda* are not the exhaustive theories of manifestation. Manifestation is brought about by the *Svātantrya* or the autonomy of Śiva.

The Role of Anugraha or Grace

According to *Śaivāgama*, *anugraha* or grace is one of the eternal activities of Śiva.

The Upaniṣads which constitute the real Vedānta also believe in anugraha. Kaṭhopaniṣad expressly says:

नायमात्मा प्रवचनेन लभ्यो
न मेधया न बहुना श्रुतेन ।
यमेवैष वृणुते तेन लभ्य-
स्तस्यैष आत्मा विवृणुते तनूँ स्वाम् ।।

"This *ātmā* cannot be attained by instruction, not by intelligence, nor by learning. To him alone, It reveals Its subtle form whom It chooses."

This stanza plainly speaks of grace, but Śaṅkara dismisses grace by a linguistic *tour de force*. He takes *eṣa* as standing for *sādhaka*, though it is a pronoun standing for the noun *ātmā*, mentioned in the stanza.

At another place, curiously enough, Śaṅkara admits grace. Commenting on the following Brahmasūtra

पराभिध्यानात् तु तिरोहितम् (Br. sū. 3, 2, 5)

Śaṅkara says:

तत् पुनस्तिरोहितं परमेश्वरं अभिध्यायतो यतमानस्य जन्तोः विधूतध्वान्तस्य तिमिरतिरस्कृतेव दृक्शक्तिरौषधवीर्याद् ईश्वरप्रसादात् संसिद्धस्य कस्यचिद् आविर्भवति न स्वभावत एव।

"Just as when the power of sight withdrawn owing to cataract is restored with the potency of medicine, even so only to some rare being whose spiritual darkness has been removed by the discipline of meditation, and who has attained fulfilment through the grace of God is Realization restored. It does not come by itself."

The word 'Īśvaraprasāda' shows clearly that Śaṅkara has admitted the grace of God in this context.

Ātmā in the Human Body

According to Śaṅkara, *ātmā* in the human body is only

sākṣi-caitanya or witnessing consciousness. Just as Brahman has no activity, even so, its reflection *ātmā* in the human body is *niṣkriya*—without activity. According to Īśvarādvayavāda, however, ātmā in the human body also is *spandamaya*. It has always the characteristic of *jñāna* and *kriyā*.

Difference in the Upāyas

Śaivāgama has four upāyas, viz. (i) *anupāya*, (ii) *śāmbhavopāya*, (iii) *śāktopāya*, and (iv) *āṇavopāya*.

These have been explained in the previous section. According to Vedānta, śravaṇa, manana, and nididhyāsana are the only means to liberation. This partially represents *Śāktopāya* of Śaivāgama. There is nothing like *śāmbhavopāya* or *āṇavopāya* in Vedānta.

Difference in the Conception of Ajñāna

According to Vedānta, *avidyā* or *ajñāna* is removed by *vidyā* or *jñāna*, and when this happens, there is *mukti* or liberation.

According to *Śaivāgama*, there are two kinds of *ajñāna*, viz. *bauddha ajñāna* and *pauruṣa ajñāna*. *Pauruṣa ajñāna* is inherent in the *puruṣa*; *bauddha ajñāna* is intellectual. By *vidyā* only *bauddha ajñāna* can be removed, *pauruṣa ajñāna* will still remain. Such a person will only be landed in blank abstraction. He will not realize *śivatva* or divinization.

Pauruṣa ajñāna has also to be removed. This can be removed by Śakti-pāta which comes about either by *dīkṣā* by a Self-realized *guru* or by direct divine grace.

Difference in the Conception of Mukti or Liberation

The ideal of *mukti* in Vedānta is *kaivalya* or isolation just as in Sāṁkhya-yoga. The only difference is that in Sāṁkhya-yoga, it is isolation from *prakṛti*, in Vedānta, it is isolation from *māyā*. The ideal of *mukti* in *Śaivāgama* is *śivatva-yojanā* or being integrated to Śiva.

According to Vedānta, the world is annulled in *mukti*. According to *Śaivāgama*, the world appears to be a form of Śiva-consciousness in liberation.